

**TOWN OF ROCKY HILL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MEETING OF APRIL 14, 2015**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Marti Stiglich called the April 14, 2015 Economic Development Commission meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Rocky Hill Town Hall, 761 Old Main Street, Rocky Hill, CT.

Those in attendance: Vice Chairman Mark Walworth, Commissioner Christopher Duff (Entered at 6:02 p.m.) and Commissioner Sharon D. Mounds. Also present: Ray Carpentino (Economic Development Director)

Those absent: Commissioner John Roderick and Commissioner Timothy Tuller.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice Chairman Walworth made a motion to approve the Minutes of the March 10, 2015 meeting of the Economic Development Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mounds and adopted unanimously by those present.

3. ROCKY HILL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE UPDATE/BUSINESS INTRODUCTION

No one was present from the Rocky Hill Chamber of Commerce.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

No one was present from the public.

5. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Ray Carpentino said he would go through this report according to the order in his memo as opposed to this meeting's agenda. (Please see the First Attachment.)

- **Town Center West Redevelopment Project Status Update**

Ray Carpentino said he and the Chairman of the Redevelopment Agency had met with Rich Vicino, the developer of Town Center West, yesterday. Rich Vicino is still under nondisclosure. Ray Carpentino said there might be a couple of minor changes (i.e. for a couple of parking

spaces, etc.) that Rich Vicino would have to go back to the Planning and Zoning Commission for. Ray Carpentino said everything is still on course. Permits have been issued for the first residential building. There will probably be a special meeting with the Redevelopment Agency this month where Rich Vicino will provide an update to them. Commissioner Mounds confirmed that Rich Vicino isn't at liberty to say what will be going in there and Ray Carpentino said he isn't. Vice Chairman Walworth asked if there might be a restaurant. Ray Carpentino said the original plan included two eating establishments, office, retail and a bank. Commissioner Mounds asked if the entranceway is going to be where the construction entrance is now. Ray Carpentino said one entranceway, for commercial only, will be where the construction entrance is now and there will be a new traffic light at Modern Tire. The other entranceway, which will be for residential only, will be at the traffic light, which is at Corporate Executive Park, on West Street. Commissioner Mounds asked if the traffic light will stay at West Side Market. Ray Carpentino said yes.

- **Ames Redevelopment Status**

There has been no movement on the Ames redevelopment project and this is due to the Proposed Zoning Regulation Amendment. Ray Carpentino spoke to the owner/developer this morning and he is waiting to see what will happen with that. The owner/developer is still hoping to do some service retail (smaller businesses) and some residential. Chairwoman Stiglich asked if there is still going to be a public meeting and Ray Carpentino said the public hearing will be held on April 22, 2015.

- **Solar City**

The Solar Farm project is on schedule. Solar City will be getting the final Purchase Power Agreements and the final Memorandum of Agreements to the Town. These won't be signed until the thirty day period has lapsed for the Town Ordinance approval. Vice Chairman Walworth asked Ray Carpentino what ZREC stood for. Ray Carpentino thinks this should be ZERC (Zero Emission Renewable Credits). Vice Chairman Walworth asked what they are auctioning. Ray Carpentino said the cost of a credit has to be bid on and this will get worked into the cost of the kilowatt hour that the Town will be paying. This is how the solar projects are funded.

- **Business Visitation**

Ray Carpentino said he had attended the Rocky Hill Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours at Solar City a couple of weeks ago. He and Chairwoman Stiglich had also attended a talk given by the Town Manager and Mayor at the Lodge. Chairwoman Stiglich said the new General Manager had nothing but good things to say with regards to the Town services, including the number of ambulance and fire calls there, etc. Most of the people who had attended that were looking for more services but she thinks the Town Manager had done an excellent job in explaining what the Town is required to provide versus what is generously provided that the Town doesn't have to provide. Commissioner Mounds asked what the Lodge is. Chairwoman Stiglich said the Lodge is a retirement community, which has full amenities, and it is on Cold Spring Road. She asked Ray Carpentino if the General Manager had said that this place is 94% occupied and he thought he said that. Commissioner Mounds asked if that visit

had been an Economic Development Commission one. Chairwoman Stiglich said she had gone because she knew the Town Manager was going to make a presentation there. Commissioner Mounds asked if the Town Manager and Mayor had been invited to that and Ray Carpentino said the Lodge invited them. Commissioner Mounds asked if that officially had been through the Mayor's office. Chairwoman Stiglich didn't know if that was through the Mayor or the Town Manager but she had expected to see the Town Manager.

- **OSLA&FP Subcommittee**

The Open Space Land Acquisition & Farmland Preservation Subcommittee (OSLA&FP) is currently working with the State Department of Agriculture on a potential acquisition and they are also looking at a couple of other farms to hopefully acquire some development rights to. Ray Carpentino said he couldn't identify the farms though. Commissioner Duff believes that one of the items the POCD (Plan of Conservation and Development) had mentioned is the possibility of exploring a Town Land Trust and he asked Ray Carpentino if this is something the OSLA&FP Subcommittee would do. Ray Carpentino said the OSLA&FP Subcommittee's charge is farmland and open space. He thinks they are focusing on farmland now in order to try to get prime farmland properties off the market as quickly as they can. Commissioner Duff asked if this would be leveraging the money that had been approved with the referendum. Ray Carpentino said that is \$10,000,000. Chairwoman Stiglich thought that referendum was only for farmland. Ray Carpentino said it was for farmland and open space. Vice Chairman Walworth asked what advantage the State partnership would give. Ray Carpentino said it would be the leveraging of the Town's money and the State would also do the title searches, etc., which could be very expensive.

- **Plan of Conservation & Development**

As required by State law, the Planning and Zoning Commission sent the final draft of this to the Town Council for comments.

- **River's Edge (Foundry) Development Project**

This project is still in the process of having data gathered and testing done for the environmental assessments for Phase III of the remedial action plans. Some selective clearing has been done on the riverbank.

- **Arburg Project**

This building is almost ready to be occupied.

- **Silas Deane Highway Improvement Program**

The Main Street Investment Grant Fund that the Town received is what is being mainly used now. The Town Staff and the BL Companies had a meeting with the utility companies. Ray Carpentino believes the proposed curb lines were being marked last Friday so that CL & P will know where to relocate the telephone poles. Vice Chairman Walworth confirmed that these

won't be going underground. Ray Carpentino said no. The Governor's Office has had two press releases on STEAP (Small Town Economic Assistance Program) Funding and thirteen Towns have received grants in the past month. Rocky Hill isn't one of these Towns yet but there are a few more grants to go.

- **Business Assistance Activities**

Sargis Engineering has received a wetland permit for their 18,000 square foot new home office in Town, which will be off of Corporate Place at the very end of the cul-de-sac. The approval is pending now with the Planning and Zoning Commission. Commissioner Mounds asked where this business exists now. Ray Carpentino said it is in Cromwell and they had been on the Silas Deane Highway in 2005 or 2006.

There is an interest with regards to a 130,000 square foot warehouse/distribution facility being built somewhere in the central area of Connecticut. Ray Carpentino said a commercial realtor has contacted him and he is trying to find a potential site.

Ray Carpentino has had a request for a second microbrewery. This microbrewery was looking for a location on Brook Street but decided that would be too close to the other brewery on Cromwell Avenue so they will be looking elsewhere. Commissioner Mounds asked what the status of the first microbrewery is. Ray Carpentino said that microbrewery will be submitting an application by the end of April so that will probably be in line for a meeting in June with the Planning and Zoning Commission for a public hearing.

Ray Carpentino is working with an Architect who is looking to occupy 30,000 square feet of office space.

Ray Carpentino had a meeting today with a potential manufacturer, which is fairly high tech, and a commercial realtor with regards to the leasing of 50,000 square feet of space. He has to do some follow-up on that. Ten to fifteen more jobs would probably be added over the next year and a half which would bring them up to fifty or sixty employees. A lot of upgrades would be required for the building so a lot of value would be added to the building. Vice Chairman Walworth asked if they are in Rocky Hill presently and Ray Carpentino said no.

Ray Carpentino spoke to someone who is interested in establishing a redemption center. He will see what happens with that because that is an odd type of use.

Chairwoman Stiglich asked about an out-of-State development company that is interested in building a Business Park. Ray Carpentino said he and the Town Planner had discussions with an out-of-State developer with regards to the building of a Business Park that would be over 1,000,000 square feet but they basically said that Rocky Hill doesn't have the room for this. Ray Carpentino doubts much progress will happen with this.

- **Miscellaneous**

Ray Carpentino said he didn't attend the ACHIEVE breakfast. Chairwoman Stiglich said she has been involved in the Central Connecticut Health District's (CCHD) ACHIEVE initiative for

the last three years. This has to do with the promotion of sustainable endeavors associated with physical activities in the Towns. This will be the fourth year that there will be an annual Trail Day in June. They will be focusing on how healthy foods make healthy bodies this year too. She mentioned that they have an annual breakfast, of which she will try to offer more information about for anyone who might want to attend this next year. Some of the people who the CCHD has provided small grants to in order to start these programs, especially in the area of physical activity with school age children, were present at that with their various programs. This year the four Towns (Berlin, Newington, Rocky Hill and Wethersfield) will be having the first Walk-A-Thon.

Ray Carpentino attended the CT Business Day event that is held every year at the Legislative Office Building. Chairwoman Stiglich said she had really wanted to go to that but she had a conflict. She asked if anything interesting had been covered. Ray Carpentino mentioned some things that were covered.

Commissioner Mounds asked Ray Carpentino if he is going to continue carrying information about the first microbrewery under "Business Assistance Activities" in his report because it isn't in this report. Ray Carpentino said yes.

Commissioner Duff said they had been looking at the new OP I Zone for a while. Ray Carpentino said that would be the BP II Zone. Commissioner Duff said it would be a new Clean Manufacturing Zone. He asked Ray Carpentino if he could give an update on that and explain how that might change some of the business proposals that the Town receives. Ray Carpentino said this recommendation luckily has made it into the POCD, which is recommending a new Business Park Zone with the current one remaining on Dividend Road. The new Business Park Zone will increase the lot size to a minimum of one and a half acres and it will eliminate many of the contractor type uses. This will be in an effort to allow and attract larger manufacturing developments along Cromwell Avenue and Brook Street. The character there is completely different from Dividend Road. There is also a recommendation (in the POCD) with regards to changing the zone on the north side of Brook Street, which is currently Office Park, to the new Business Park Zone. The request with regards to allowing limited manufacturing in the Office Park Zone is silent right now but he said it doesn't mean that that can't happen. They will start working on revising the Zoning Regulations once the POCD gets approved. They can work on the new Business Park Zone at that point and this Commission can push for allowing limited amount of manufacturing in the Office Park Zone if they feel it is appropriate. Commissioner Duff confirmed that the POCD would get approved as the first step and then they could perhaps make a recommendation to having the Zoning Regulations revised. Ray Carpentino said that is how it is supposed to work. The POCD is just a guide and the Regulations are the laws.

Ray Carpentino said he had asked Camille Gilbert, who works in the Town Manager's Office, to work on the Business Directory and she has completed this. Ray Carpentino showed the draft product to this Commission and he said Camille Gilbert did a fantastic job. This will probably be put online for internal use with some of the information probably being blocked out. Rocky Hill has approximately 840 businesses and this doesn't include probably over 900 home occupations, which they want to keep in Town if they can and which they will need to keep track of because those will need space eventually if they are successful.

6. CORRESPONDENCE/DISCUSSION

Ray Carpentino referred to a letter he handed out to this Commission that he, the Town Planner and the Planning and Zoning Commission had received from ADC Enterprises, Inc. (Please see the Second Attachment.) Chairwoman Stiglich asked if this is the property that the Open Space Commission has been having an issue with because all of the trees were taken down.

Commissioner Duff said the Open Space Commission does have an open item at the current time with this owner. Ray Carpentino said the Town is waiting for this owner to give them some conceptual plans. Chairwoman Stiglich said this owner is concerned about the Mixed Use Zone being changed, which doesn't cover the waterfront now. Ray Carpentino said the only thing it will do is not allow residential. Chairwoman Stiglich said this is what the owner is looking for and it is a Planning and Zoning issue.

Chairwoman Stiglich asked the Commissioners if there was anything else they wanted to discuss. Commissioner Duff said this coming weekend, April 18, 2015 and April 19, 2015, there will be the Made in Connecticut Expo at the Durham Fairgrounds. He gave more details about this and wanted to do a "plug" for their local businesses.

Chairwoman Stiglich said she is involved in many volunteer activities that are geared towards older Americans. May will be National Older Americans Month and there will be various activities throughout the State. Commissioner Mounds asked how old people have to be for this. Chairwoman Stiglich said a lot of the programs that are sponsored by the Federal Government are for people who are sixty-five years old and over. She will be having a TV show that will be devoted towards this with two or three organizations in this State that are involved with dealing with the elderly. Vice Chairman Walworth asked when that will be aired and Chairwoman Stiglich said this will either be the first or third Tuesday in May.

7. ADJOURN

Commissioner Mounds made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:35 p.m. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Walworth and adopted unanimously by those present.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo-Anne Booth
Recording Secretary